

IB No. 231/63
12 September 1963
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MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Manufacturing and Services Division, ORR

ATTENTION

FROM : Chief, CIA/PID (NPIC)

SUBJECT : Ya-an to Li-ma Highway

REFERENCE : (1) Requirement No. ORR/302/62
(2) Project No. C 301/63

1. This memorandum is in response to the referenced requirement requesting:

a. The preparation of text and maps indicating the alignment and condition of the road from Ya-an (29 59N - 103 05E) to Li-ma (28 24N - 97 04E) and any roads leading from this route to the Sino-Indian Border.

b. Indicate any roads in the area which appear to be under construction or recently completed.

c. Describe any roads leading from China to India.

2. That portion of the study from Ya-an (29 59N - 103 05E) to Chamdo (31 09N - 97 17E) has been answered by memorandum number IB 222/63, 2 September 1963 (Project C 447/63), which has already been completed and transmitted to your office. The remaining portion from Chamdo to Li-ma (Rima) 28 24N - 97 04E is shown on map CIA/PID/IB-P-469/63 and the description of its condition is as follows:

a. Chamdo to Rau (29 30N - 96 47E)

(1) This section is a two-lane graded road with a natural (earth) surface which has been reinforced with broken stone.

(2) Bridges observed appear to have been constructed to support heavy vehicular traffic. Most long bridges observed were deck-girders constructed of concrete.

(3) Grades and curves appeared to be relatively light between Chamdo and Bomda G (30 14N - 97 25E), except for the Poda Pass (30 34N - 97 20E) where many heavy grades and numerous sharp curves and switchbacks occur. Between Bomda G and Rau the terrain is rugged. Here traffic encounters numerous sections with heavy grades, sharp curves and switchbacks. The total distance between Chamdo and Li-ma is approximately 300 miles.

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B. Rau to Li-ma (Rima)

(1) This road, proceeding southward from Rau through river valleys, is an improved road and generally keeps its width of approximately [] to Dzachung (28 35N - 97 12E). Beyond Dzachung the road quickly disintegrates into a very narrow road, little better than a pack-animal trail. The road continues southward through Li-ma to the border area. Beyond the border, there is no evidence of a road. Southeastward from Li-ma, an improved road follows a stream approximately five miles to the border.

(2) The section of road between Rau and Dzachung is improved and appears to maintain a two-lane [] width. The surface of the road does not appear as smooth as the surface of the Szechwan Highway and the road does not appear to be graded. The bridges do not appear to be constructed to sustain the heavy loads as does the Szechwan Highway. Between Dzachung and Li-ma some streams are crossed by means of a ford. Grades on this road are relatively light as it generally traverses river valleys.

3. The photo analyst on this project was [] who may be contacted on [] should you have further questions regarding this project.

4. This project is considered to be complete.

ENCLOSURES:

1 annotated map (CIA/PID/IB-P-469/63)

TOP SECRET

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from automatic
downgrading and
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